



The stunning Horned Guan is without a doubt one of the best birds in the world (Nigel Redman)

SOUTHERN MEXICO

26 FEBRUARY / 3 MARCH – 19 MARCH 2017

LEADERS: MARK VAN BEIRS and NIGEL REDMAN

On our 11th Southern Mexico tour we assembled a mouth-watering list of endemics and specialities on our wanderings through the varied habitats of this scenic, very birdy and sadly much maligned country. Our travels took us first to the pristine evergreen and cloud forests of the magnificent El Triunfo Reserve where the fabled Horned Guan showed so very well, next to marvels like Highland Guan, White-faced Quail-Dove, Fulvous Owl, Blue-throated Motmot, Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, Wine-throated and Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds, Resplendent Quetzal, Black-throated Jay, Spotted and Russet Nightingale Thrushes and Prevost's and White-eared Ground Sparrows. The main tour took us from the forests and scrubby hills of the deep southern state of Chiapas, through the coastal habitats, pine-oak forests and dry inter-montane valleys of Oaxaca, via the limestone hills of Veracruz to the high altitude pine forests and marshes near Mexico City. The Birds of the Trip were without a doubt the striking Horned Guan that performed so very, very well at El

Triunfo and the uniquely coloured Pink-headed Warbler that stole our hearts near San Cristobal. The cracking Bumblebee Hummingbird, the magnificent Fulvous Owl, the exquisite Orange-breasted and Rose-bellied Buntings, the rare Golden-cheeked and the exquisite Red Warblers and the unique Ocellated Thrasher were also very much appreciated. Other interesting species that showed well included Singing Quail, Pink-footed, Townsend's and Galapagos Shearwaters, Clark's Grebe, Boat-billed Heron, Blue-footed and Nazca Boobies, White-breasted Hawk, Pomarine Jaeger, Pheasant Cuckoo, Pacific Screech Owl, Mountain Pygmy Owl, Oaxaca and Garnet-throated Hummingbirds, Citreoline Trogon, Russet-crowned Motmot, Grey-breasted and Strickland's Woodpeckers, Collared Forest Falcon, Rufous-breasted Spinetail,, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided and Green Shrike-Vireos, Golden Vireo, Dwarf Jay, Grey Silky-flycatcher, Black-capped Swallow, Giant, Sumichrast's, Nava's, Happy and Rufous-browed Wrens, Blue and Blue-and-white Mockingbirds, Brown-backed and Slate-coloured Solitaires, the special Olive Warbler, Crescent-chested, Fan-tailed and Golden-browed Warblers, Black-polled and Hooded Yellowthroats, Spot-breasted and Bar-winged Orioles and Sierra Madre, Bridled, Striped and Cinnamon-tailed Sparrows. Mammals were not very obvious, but a Tamandua was found at Puerto Arista and a pod of playful Common Bottle-nosed Dolphins enlivened our exciting boat trip off Puerto Angel.



Clay-coloured Thrush is a common inhabitant of gardens (Nigel Redman)

The tour started upon arrival at the airport of Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of Mexico's southernmost state, where we were met by the smiling faces of Amy and Jorge, our very capable guides for the El Triunfo pre trip. We got organized, boarded our comfortable bus and made several stops in stretches of fair looking habitat as we drove to the little town of Jaltenango, deep in the heart of the state of Chiapas. We got to know a good selection of widespread open country birds like Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Wood Stork, Green Heron, Western Cattle Egret, Great and Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Heron, Neotropic Cormorant, Turkey and Black Vultures, Roadside Hawk, Killdeer, Inca Dove, Common and Ruddy Ground Doves, White-winged

Dove, Groove-billed Ani, Berylline Hummingbird, Green and Ringed Kingfishers, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Northern Crested Caracara, American Kestrel, the perky Greenish Elaenia, Vermilion and Social Flycatchers, Great Kiskadee, Tropical Kingbird, Grey-breasted Martin, Clay-coloured Thrush, Lesser Goldfinch, Scrub Euphonia, Grey-crowned Yellowthroat, colourful Altamira and Streak-backed Orioles, Red-winged and Melodious Blackbirds, Giant and Bronzed Cowbirds, the ubiquitous and very showy Great-tailed Grackle, Blue-grey Tanager and Blue-black Grassquit. Wintering northern migrants included Western Osprey, Spotted Sandpiper, Ruby-throated Hummingbird (females only), Least Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Northern Rough-winged and Barn Swallows, Common Yellowthroat, American Yellow Warbler, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Western Tanager and Painted Bunting. We also added Northern Bobwhite (a covey of the distinctive race *coyo/cos*), American White Pelican, Great Black Hawk, a feisty Ferruginous Pygmy Owl and very attractive Scissor-tailed Flycatchers to the tally. We heard the shrill trills of a Ruddy Crake emanate from a small marsh, but it remained a voice. In late afternoon we rolled into the little town of Jaltenango.



The colourful Russet-crowned Motmot (Nigel Redman) and the comical White-throated Magpie-Jay (Mark Van Beirs)

At dawn, we boarded a converted cattle truck and drove slowly along a winding dirt track towards the trailhead, situated at the edge of the coffee plantation of Finca Prusia. We stopped several times at rough meadows and forest edges and added lots of birds to the list. The rare Prevost's Ground Sparrow showed very well in a shrubby thicket and its close relative, the colourful White-eared Ground Sparrow also behaved beautifully. Other goodies seen on this travel day included Short-tailed Hawk, Red-billed Pigeon, Vaux's Swift, Canivet's Emerald, Azure-crowned Hummingbird, Russet-crowned Motmot, Collared Aracari, Acorn and Velasquez's Woodpeckers, White-crowned Parrot and White-fronted Amazons in flight, Green Parakeets (two flocks), Olivaceous Woodcreeper, Ochre-bellied Flycatcher (showing off its distinctive wing-lifting behaviour in a fruiting tree), Greater Pewee, Yellow-bellied, Boat-billed, Dusky-capped and Brown-crested Flycatchers, Long-tailed Manakin (male and female), Masked Tityra, Rufous-browed Peppershrike, Plumbeous, Blue-headed and Warbling Vireos, Lesser Greenlet, the attractive White-throated Magpie-Jay, Cabanis's Wren (a recent split from Plain Wren), Nashville, MacGillivray's, Grace's, Townsend's, Rufous-capped and Wilson's Warblers, American Redstart, Rusty Sparrow, the noisy Black-headed Saltator, Hepatic, Summer and White-winged Tanagers, Red-throated Ant Tanager, Blue Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting. Around midday we arrived at the trailhead, munched our sandwiches, stacked up on nuts and water and got ready for the 11,5 km walk up to the El Triunfo clearing. The muleteros packed our main luggage on bad-tempered mules and we started walking along the well laid out trail. Not much was moving in the beautiful sweetgum and oak forests but we soon bumped into a small ant swarm where a couple of attractive Lesson's Motmots performed well. A Wood Thrush showed and some lucky souls connected with a shy

Thicket Tinamou. We recorded several Highland Guans and admired the display of tiny Emerald-chinned Hummingbirds at their lek. We also noted Green-throated Mountaingem and Black-and-white and gorgeous Crescent-chested Warblers. In late afternoon, at the ridge, we suddenly saw a Horned Guan flutter from tree to tree and soon we all had our first looks at this beauty. Sadly, it didn't hang around, but we were happy with our first encounter with this fabled bird! Broad-winged Hawk, Spotted Nightingale-Thrush, Golden-browed Warbler, Slate-throated Redstart, Chestnut-capped Brushfinch, Common Bush Tanager and Deppe's Squirrel kept us further amused till we reached the famous clearing. At dusk we heard a Mexican Whip-poor-will call in the distance. We checked into our fairly Spartan accommodation and enjoyed our first dinner at this fabulous venue.



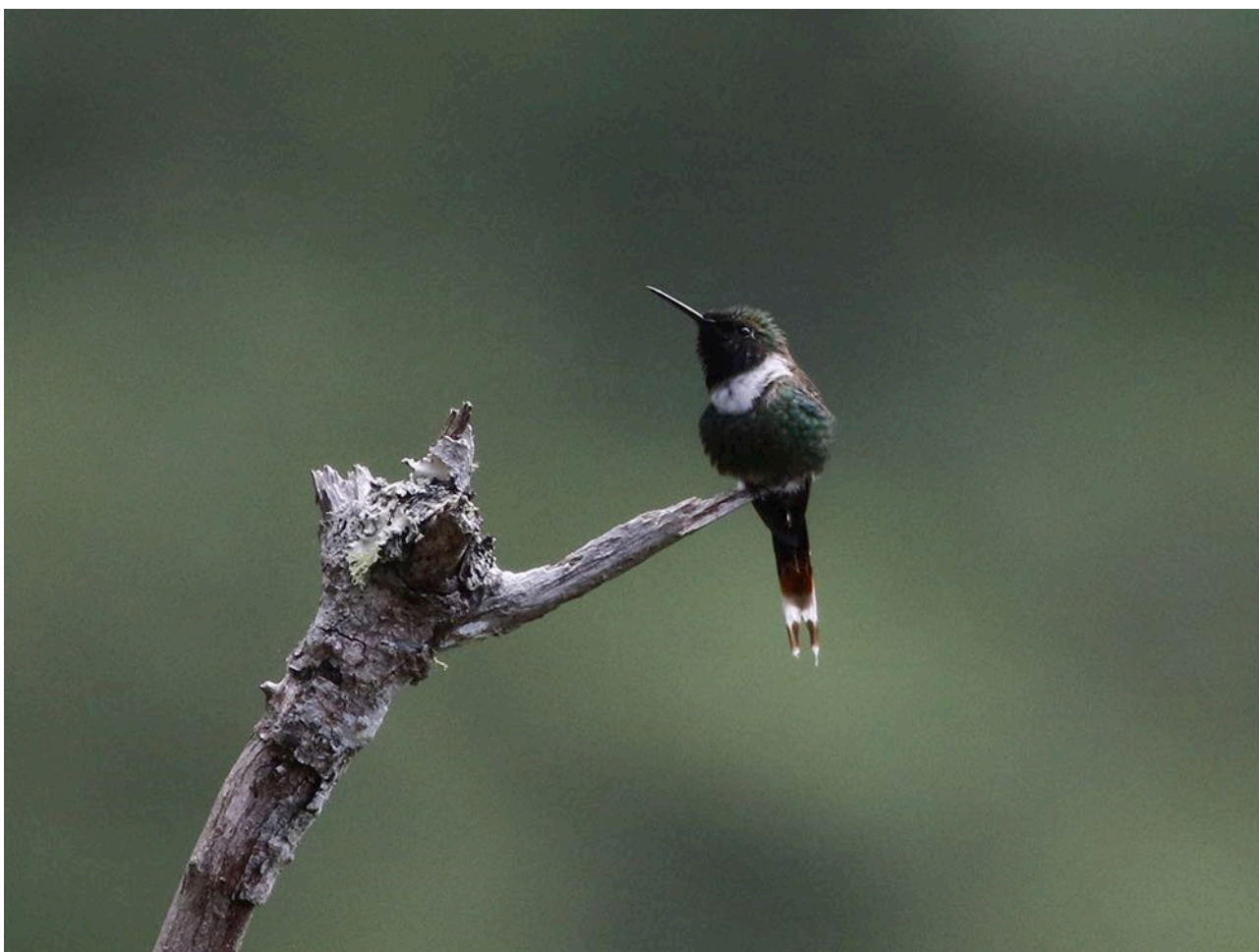
Black-and-white Warbler (Nigel Redman); Deppe's Squirrel (Mark Van Beirs)

At dawn we were sipping our coffee while standing about in the clearing, hearing and seeing the forest come alive. Barred and Collared Forest Falcons were calling and the wing rattles and whistles of Highland Guans dominated the dawn chorus. Band-tailed Pigeons were sunning themselves in the canopy of a forest giant. A flowering hibiscus was visited by a fabulous male Violet Sabrewing and a patch of flowering bushes held a smart male Wine-throated Hummingbird. This beautiful little hummer was nr 5,000 for Derek's lifelist. A superb male Resplendent Quetzal displayed over the trees, a Hairy Woodpecker of the dark *sanctorum* race obliged and Northern Tufted and Hammond's Flycatchers, Grey Silky Flycatcher, Brown-backed Solitaire, Black Thrush, Hooded Grosbeak, Elegant Euphonia, Blue-crowned Chlorophonia and Flame-coloured Tanager sat about. Several extremely smart male Yellow Grosbeaks of the orange race *aurantiacus* were singing away from the bush tops. After a hearty breakfast we took to the trails and immediately heard several Singing Quail calling close to the trail. Not much later we enjoyed brilliant views of these delightful creatures. A secretive Blue-throated Motmot allowed scope studies as it sat hiding amongst bromeliads high in the canopy. We also encountered a flock of rather shy Black-throated Jays darting through the mid storey. Spot-crowned Woodcreeper, Yellowish Flycatcher, an unexpected Worm-eating Warbler and an ever so well-groomed Golden-browed Warbler. In late morning the forest seemed rather dead until we found a splendid Horned Guan that posed high in a bromeliad-clad forest giant. We enjoyed great scope studies of this unique bird and the photographers had a grand time. The red horn and the bulging white eyes showed well. Glorious moments! A sneaky Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush and an Ovenbird were seen on the way back to camp. The highlight of the afternoon walk was without a doubt the fabulous pair of Fulvous Owls. These large, very impressive nightbirds posed regally in their forest realm. Emerald Toucanet and some Chestnut-collared Swifts were the final birds of our first full day at this magnificent location.



Early morning at the El Triunfo clearing; Flame-coloured Tanager (Mark Van Beirs)

Our day trip to the remote valley of Cañada Honda (c7km one way) took us first up to the continental divide and then down through cloud and evergreen forest and through the pine zone to a stretch of mixed shrubby woodland, which the rare and localized Cabanis's (or Azure-rumped) Tanager favours. Sadly only silhouette views were obtained of this speciality. Several retiring White-faced Quail-Doves were flushed from the trail. A near endemic Rufous Sabrewing showed well, but best of all were the smashing views of a male Sparkling-tailed Woodstar, another near endemic hummingbird. Paltry Tyrannulet, Blue-headed Vireo, Rufous-and-white Wren and a cracking Godman's Pit Viper were also observed on this quite tough hike.



The male Sparkling-tailed Woodstar that posed so well for us (Nigel Redman)

On our final full day at El Triunfo we tried to fill in a few gaps in our list. At dawn most participants went on the trails by themselves to try for some of the more secretive or skulking forest denizens. White-faced Quail-Dove was seen by some, but luckily two of these retiring birds showed incredibly well from the kitchen window as they visited the waste disposal dump. The cameras went happily berserk! A Red-tailed Hawk flew over the clearing and after breakfast the trails gave us a nice Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner, some Unicoloured Jays, a well-behaved Rufous-browed Wren and some heard only Central American Spider Monkeys. In the afternoon our main aim was to try to get better looks at Resplendent Quetzal, but we had to wait till the final hour of the day before we managed to obtain magnificent views of a stunning male. While waiting for this long-tailed avian jewel to appear we were treated to good looks at a circling, near endemic White-breasted Hawk and some White-collared Swifts.



A fabulous male Highland Guan (Nigel Redman)

Next day at dawn the clearing gave us a perched, outstanding male Resplendent Quetzal next to an Eye-ringed Flatbill and a flock of more than 20 Black-throated Jays. Sadly, the time had come to leave the delights of El Triunfo. After a filling breakfast we packed up and started walking to the trailhead at Finca Prusia. The smooth, mostly downhill walk was interrupted by splendid farewell looks at a Horned Guan. We also found a perched King Vulture, a distant Black Hawk-Eagle, a male Collared Trogon and a Ruddy Foliage-gleaner. At the trailhead our truck was waiting, so we said goodbye to the friendly muleteros and drove to Jaltenango where we picked up the rest of our luggage and a tasty lunch. In the afternoon our bus took us to Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of Chiapas with its half a million inhabitants. We made a short stop at a small marsh where some people had a brief look at a Ruddy Crake. In the evening we met up with the three other participants who were joining us for the main part of the tour.



Singing Quail and Red-breasted Chat showed well in the Sumidero Canyon (Nigel Redman)

Our full day in the Canyon del Sumidero was a birdy experience. The evergreen and scrubby woodland along the slopes of this deep and truly impressive canyon held a rich and varied assortment of birds. We arrived before dawn, but only heard a distant Buff-collared Nightjar call in the distance. We made several stops in bamboo-cloaked woodland where the highlight was a splendidly performing male Red-breasted Chat. A party of three Singing Quail showed at length and allowed brilliant studies and great photography. We admired males of Gartered and Collared Trogons and struggled to get good looks at a perky Belted Flycatcher. A Yellow-throated Vireo was a good find and several Fan-tailed Warblers gave great looks at an army ant swarm. We held watch at a tall red flowering tree and were rewarded by a fine male Bar-winged Oriole in all his glory together with confusingly plumaged Tennessee and Nashville Warblers which sported red throats due to staining by the red pollen. Other interesting species in the Sumidero included Plain Chachalaca, a heard only Middle American Screech Owl, Canivet's Emerald, Nutting's Flycatcher, Violet-green Swallow, White-throated Magpie-Jay, Grey Catbird, Yellow-throated Euphonia, Ovenbird, Streak-backed Oriole, Rusty and Olive Sparrows and Blue, Indigo and smart Painted Buntings. In late afternoon we held a parrot patrol from the parking of our hotel which produced good looks at many White-fronted Amazons, a few White-crowned Parrots, several flocks of Green Parakeets and two pairs of Orange-chinned Parakeets playing about in a palm tree.



The exquisite Nava's Wren (Nigel Redman) and the very vocal Brown Jay (Mark Van Beirs)

The forested limestone hills of the El Ocote reserve hold one of the most intriguing wrens in existence and it, luckily, didn't take too long to get to grips with this great bird. We obtained fantastic views of a Nava's Wren in its distinctive karst habitat as it perched in the open on a log and showed very well while singing its heart out. A fantastic experience! Another highlight of our visit was the usually hard to see Green Shrike-Vireo. Two birds showed very well in the canopy of a medium-sized tree just next to the track. Other interesting species included Stripe-throated Hermit, White-bellied Emerald, Keel-billed Toucan, vociferous Brown Jays,

Spot-breasted Wren, Slate-coloured Solitaire, Olive-backed Euphonia, a skulking Kentucky Warbler, White-winged Tanager, Red-throated Ant Tanager and Black-faced Grosbeak. After a tasty lunch in Tuxtla Gutierrez we drove to San Cristobal, but because of an accident on the fast toll road, we were obliged to take the winding old road which took us through unexpected beautiful scenery to the lovely colonial town of San Cristobal de las Casas.

Just after dawn we were exploring a nearby stretch of humid pine forest full of bromeliads and dense brushy ground cover. A stunning Pink-headed Warbler was found flitting about in the understorey and although it never really kept still it allowed great looks. What a marvel! We didn't realize then that this brilliant little bird would become the Bird of the Trip! Several Red Crossbills flew overhead. Afterwards we visited a quiet backroad through montane forest where a colourful flowerbank held a smart male Garnet-throated Hummingbird, a female Amethyst-throated Mountaingem (previously known as A-t Hummingbird) and a male Rivoli's Hummingbird. The biggest surprise here was a tremendous male Golden-cheeked Warbler that showed well, but all too briefly. This much appreciated bird was obviously on his way back to his breeding grounds in Texas. We also observed Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker (of the distinctive race *mexicanoides*), Hutton's Vireo, Rufous-collared Thrush, Yellow-eyed Junco, Spotted Towhee and Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer. After lunch some of us strolled through the colonial centre of San Cristobal and in late afternoon we visited the Huitepec reserve where Rufous-browed Wren and White-naped Brushfinch (of the yellow-throated form) obliged near the entrance. We walked up along a steep trail to a clearing where Mexican Whip-poor-will called and showed nicely at close range. We waited for owl activity, but the cold and windy weather obviously kept the nightbirds in hiding as not a sniff was heard, sadly.



Orange-breasted and Rose-bellied Buntings performed marvellously (Nigel Redman)

Next morning we paid an early visit to a secluded forested valley near San Cristobal where we strolled about waiting for the sun to hit the treetops. Suddenly eight Black-capped Swallows flew out of a fissure in a rock face and we managed to see the distinctive forked tails and subtle colour of this localized, near endemic. Not much later we were also watching a much-wanted Blue-and-white Mockingbird posing in a medium-sized tree. We also found Steller's Jay, Band-backed and Canyon Wrens, Eastern Bluebird and Audubon's Warbler. In mid-morning we left San Cristobal and drove to the little town of Arriaga, passing through Tuxtla Gutierrez for the last time. In the afternoon we explored the nearby foothills and had a splendid time observing Rosita's (Rose-bellied) and Orange-breasted Buntings, two fantastic endemics that performed so incredibly well at close range. The supporting cast included West Mexican Chachalaca, Golden-crowned Emerald, Green-fronted Hummingbird, Citreoline Trogon, a marvellous Russet-crowned Motmot, Orange-fronted Parakeet, Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Banded Wren, White-lored Gnatcatcher, Tropical Mockingbird, Altamira Oriole and Stripe-headed Sparrow.

We spent a delightful morning in the varied habitats of the Puerto Arista area. Pre-dawn we easily located a terrific Pacific Screech Owl that gave very nice looks. Dawn found us in an area of rough meadows with palm scrub where a family of alluring Giant Wrens showed at length. This sprightly species is confined to the

Pacific coastal strip of the state of Chiapas. We heard the near-endemic White-bellied Chachalaca a few times, but only glimpsed it. Spot-breasted and Orchard Orioles were visiting flowering tabebuia trees and in this birdy environment of lagoons, scrub, meadows and shrubby woodland we also observed Roseate Spoonbill, Great Blue and Tricoloured Herons, Reddish Egret, American White Pelican, Anhinga, Western Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Common Black Hawk, Red-billed Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Pauraque, Cinnamon Hummingbird, Plain-capped Starthroat, lots of Velasquez's Woodpeckers, a cracking male Lineated Woodpecker, Laughing Falcon, a lovely terset Merlin, a perched immature Peregrine (of the *tundrius* race), Pacific Parakeet, lots and lots of Great Kiskadees and Tropical Kingbirds, lovely Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Yellow-breasted Chat, Eastern Meadowlark, Mexican Cacique, Buff-throated Saltator and White-collared Seedeater. While scanning, we discovered a lump in the top of a tree, which turned out to be a Tamandua sunning itself. Good fun. A mangrove creek gave us several cracking Boat-billed Herons, some American White Ibises, a Black-crowned Night Heron and a Black-necked Stilt. We also had a look at the Pacific Ocean where a shrimp vessel was being followed by dozens of Laughing Gulls, Brown Pelicans, Magnificent Frigatebirds and Royal Terns. In the afternoon we drove to the unlovely town of Tehuantepec, passing through some of the largest windturbine farms in the world.



A male Lineated Woodpecker (Nigel Redman); a lovely Pacific Screech-Owl (Mark Van Beirs)

An early morning in the Tehuantepec dry woodland gave us excellent views at a singing, subtly-plumaged Cinnamon-tailed (or Sumichrast's) Sparrow. It took a while to pin this very localized, endemic species down, but eventually the scope views were really great. Several Sclater's Wrens were seen and Doubleday's Hummingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher and several glorious Orange-breasted Buntings were also much appreciated. In mid-morning we started our drive west along the Pacific coast to Puerto Angel. A stop in a stretch of woodland gave us West Mexican Chachalaca and Golden Vireo and the ocean and a nearby saltwater lagoon produced Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, American Coot, Blue-footed Booby, American Golden Plover, American Avocet (a nice flock included several birds in smart breeding attire), Wilson's Phalarope, a large Royal Tern flock which held several Elegant Terns and a beautiful male Vermilion Flycatcher. Later, another stop in a patch of woodland added Happy Wren, Golden-cheeked Woodpecker, Ivory-billed Woodcreeper and a Cassin's Vireo to the list. We arrived in late afternoon in the attractive seaside village of Puerto Angel where we heard the murmuring waves from our beds.



Pink-footed Shearwater and Pomarine Jaeger enlivened our boat trip off Puerto Angel (Mark Van Beirs)

We boarded our small boat at dawn and slowly sailed up to 10 nautical miles offshore on a beautifully flat ocean. Our experienced captain pointed out lots of Green Turtles and we identified four species of shearwater: lots of Pink-footed visiting us from their Chilean breeding grounds, a small number of Galapagos Shearwaters, several Townsend's and a single dark morph Wedge-tailed Shearwater. A smart adult Pomarine Skua flew past and a subadult Nazca Booby came to inspect us. We encountered several pods of Common Bottle-nosed Dolphins. One of these stayed with us for quite a while and these playful creatures really showed off their bow riding prowess. We obtained fantastic views at extremely close range of these incredible mammals. Upon returning to the coast we circled the stack of Roca Blanca, where hundreds of Brown Boobies and Magnificent Frigatebirds were loafing. A smart adult Franklin's Gull in breeding attire was feeding together with Laughing Gulls at the harbour entrance. In the afternoon we paid our first visit to the nearby sierra where in the foothills we found endemic Wagler's Toucanets, Cooper's Hawk, a male Oaxaca Hummingbird for a lucky soul, Long-billed Starthroat, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Swainson's Thrush and Red-legged Honeycreeper. Our seafood dinner on the roof of our hotel was a very tasty affair.



Nazca Booby and Franklin's Gull provided more entertainment at sea (Mark Van Beirs)

Next day was spent covering different altitudes of the Sierra de Miahuatlan on our way to the city of Oaxaca. In the lower reaches we explored some evergreen woodland where a Crane Hawk allowed scope looks, a cracking male Oaxaca Hummingbird showed very well and a Bright-rumped Attila insisted on being seen at close range. Lots of Grey-breasted Martins adorned the wires in the villages. Higher up we found a Mexican Hermit at some flowering heliconias and scoped an endemic Cinnamon-sided Hummingbird and a Long-

billed Starthroat on top of a bush. In the pine zone another Oaxaca Hummingbird was located and a sublime Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo obliged. Olive-sided Flycatcher, Blue Mockingbird and an Audubon's Oriole (of the *dickeyae* form) interrupted our picnic lunch. In the afternoon we drove further up the sierra along a very windy road and later crossed a cactus-studded plateau. In late afternoon we arrived at our nice hotel in the suburbs of Oaxaca.



Rock Wrens love archaeological sites (Nigel Redman)

At daybreak we were birding in some scrubby woodland near the village of Teotitlan where we were treated to an overdose of endemics as Dusky Hummingbird, Grey-breasted Woodpecker, Woodhouse's Scrub Jay, Boucard's Wren, a smart male Black-backed Oriole, several Black-vented Orioles, attractive Bridled Sparrows and burly White-throated Towhees enlivened the scene. American Bushtits, Bewick's Wren and a glorious Painted Whitestart added to the enjoyment. A nearby pond held several Ruddy Duck (including a male in breeding plumage), lots of Least Grebes, displaying Snowy Egrets, Least Sandpipers and several Buff-bellied Pipits. The archaeological site of Yagul is surrounded by impressive pipe organ and prickly pear cactae where Beautiful Sheartail, Pileated Flycatcher, Northern Raven and Rock Wrens were observed. A nearby brush-covered hill was explored but nothing was moving in the heat of the day. In late afternoon the garden of our hotel gave us several attractive Rufous-backed Thrushes and lots of House Finches.



The smart Olive Warbler is always a major attraction (Nigel Redman)

Our full day in the magnificent pine and pine-oak forests of La Cumbre in the Sierra de Aloapaneca was simply splendid. Walking amidst beautiful trees along a wide track without any traffic made for delightful birding. Pre-dawn we watched a Mexican Whip-poor-will close by in the beam of our torch. A cute Mountain Pygmy Owl gave splendid scope views and several glistening White-eared Hummingbirds visited a flowerbank. A gaudy Mountain Trogon and a modestly-plumaged Strong-billed Woodcreeper were also noted. A party of lovely Dwarf Jays interrupted our picnic lunch together with some Grey-barred Wrens and Steller's Jays. As these diminutive corvids were very obliging, we obtained great looks while munching our sandwiches. Another important species here was the much-desired Olive Warbler. As it is the only member of its family we made sure everyone got good views of this very special bird. Incredibly adorable, endemic Red Warblers were marvellously common, but we sure never got tired of looking at these avian jewels. A pair of bumbling Collared Towhees foraged in dense undergrowth and were successfully enticed to show much better and exactly the same happened with a pair of Rufous-capped Brushfinches. We also found Mexican Chickadee, lots of American Bushtits, Russet Nightingale-Thrush, American Robin and Orange-crowned and Hermit Warblers.

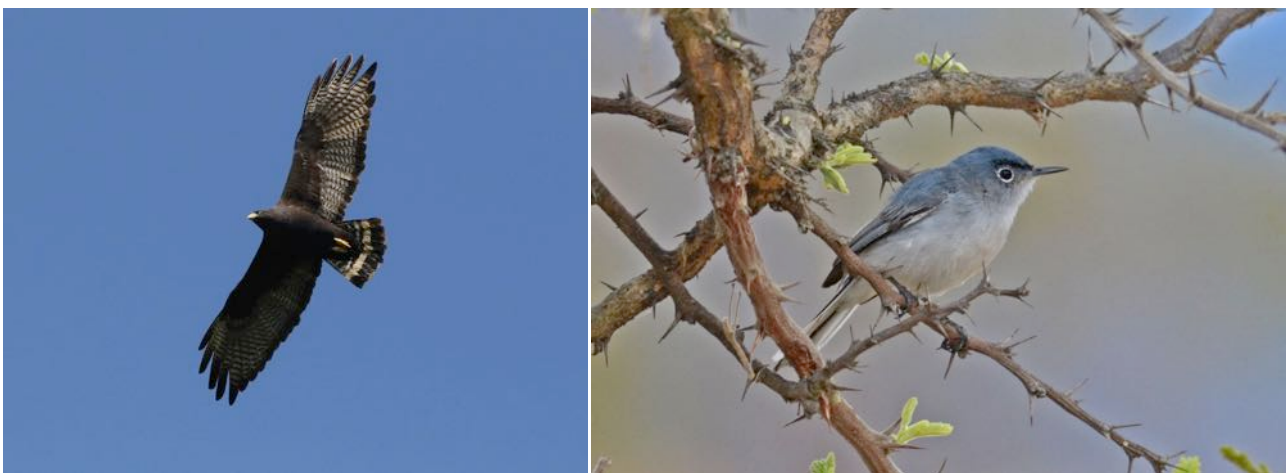
Next morning before dawn we were listening for Buff-collared Nightjar in the shrubby woodland near Monte Alban and although one came quite close, it didn't show any real interest in its rival. Later we strolled amongst the impressive ruins of this old capital of the rich Zapotec culture. Monte Alban is one of Mexico's most famous World Heritage Sites, but it is also a good spot for several Oaxaca endemics. We found it rather quiet but still picked up goodies like Blue Mockingbird, White-tailed Kite (beautifully showing at close range), American Dusky Flycatcher and Rock Wren, but best of all was the superb Oaxaca Sparrow that was quietly feeding along a shrubby edge. We admired all the subtle features of this localized endemic in the

scope. Great stuff! After this success we returned to the hotel for an early lunch, but a bus strike around the central bus station delayed our plans a bit, as all the main roads in central Oaxaca were blocked. Eventually we managed to leave town and drove via another winding road to the town of Tuxtepec, situated on the Atlantic slope. A brief stop in a patch of oak shrub resulted in unusually fantastic looks at a cracking, endemic Ocellated Thrasher at close range.



Mountain Pygmy Owl (Nigel Redman) and Dwarf Jay (Mark Van Beirs) were some of the highlights at La Cumbre

Our explorations of the famous Valle Nacional started in the lower reaches after having tackled no fewer than 64 'topes' (sleeping policemen), which can be truly lethal in this part of the world, as many of them are unmarked and often not indicated. The lowland evergreen forest produced great scope looks at a pair of Central American Pygmy Owls, a low flying King Vulture, a distantly perched White Hawk, Grey Hawk, a furtive Crested Guan, a female Black-crested Coquette, Keel-billed Toucan, Red-lore Amazon, Olive-throated Parakeet, Piratic and Couch's Flycatchers, Brown Jay, Cedar Waxwing, Tropical Parula, Chestnut-headed Oropendola, a lively colony of Montezuma Oropendolas including displaying birds, Yellow-tailed and Black-cowled Orioles and very smart Crimson-collared Tanagers. In mid-morning we tackled the mid altitude deciduous woodland where we heard and glimpsed a Long-tailed Wood Partridge, heard a couple of coveys of Spotted Wood Quail call at close range and had excellent looks at a rather well-behaved Pheasant Cuckoo and a magnificent male Bumblebee Hummingbird. Golden-olive Woodpecker, Ruddy Foliage-gleaner, Azure-hooded Jay, Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush and a gorgeous yellow-bellied White-naped Brushfinch were other nice additions.



The Turkey Vulture mimicking Zone-tailed Hawk (Nigel Redman); a perky Blue-grey Gnatcatcher (Mark Van Beirs)

Another morning in the Valle Nacional saw us filling in some more gaps in the lower reaches, where Scaled Pigeon, Bat Falcon, a well-groomed Rufous-breasted Spinetail, Yellow-bellied Elaenia, Long-billed

Gnatwren, Yellow-billed Cacique, Yellow-breasted Chat and a displaying male Variable Seedeater caught our attention. We heard the distinctive calls of a Short-billed Pigeon, but were unable to locate the bird. After lunch in Tuxtepec, we hit the road to Cordoba, the main centre of coffee growing in the state of Veracruz. Marshes on the way yielded Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Blue-winged Teal, White-faced Ibis, a very nice Bare-throated Tiger Heron, a female Snail Kite, lots of Northern Jacanas, Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture, a fantastic Zone-tailed Hawk just overhead, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Sand Martin, Tree Swallow and a few Mangrove Swallows. In late afternoon we arrived in the city of Cordoba.



Bare-throated Tiger Heron and White-faced Ibis were noted near Tuxtepec (Nigel Redman)

Next morning we walked up a limestone hill covered in coffee plantations shaded by large trees and dotted with modest cliff faces. As it had rained profusely the previous day, the trail was rather slippery, so we took it really easy. The highlight was a fabulous Sumichrast's Wren that showed very well while singing its heart out perched at the edge of a karst outcrop. A dark morph Collared Forest Falcon was lured into view and a wonderful Hooded Warbler showed very well. Other additions to the list included Curve-winged Sabrewing, White-breasted Wood Wren, Blue-winged Warbler and Red-crowned Ant Tanager. The afternoon drive to Mexico City took longer than anticipated due to serious road works and lots of traffic. Our able man on the spot drove the final stretch into the terribly confusing traffic of this megapolis of more than 21 million people.



Sierra Madre Sparrow and Striped Sparrow are both localized endemics (Nigel Redman)

Just after dawn, we were scanning an area of bunch grass with scattered pines high upon a ridge on the southern boundary of Mexico City, where it had frozen overnight. Soon the rarest bird of the tour appeared and showed well at the edges of a ploughed field. The exceedingly rare Sierra Madre Sparrow has a tiny population of just a few hundred birds and only occurs here at the southern edge of this huge conurbation and in an isolated area in western Mexico. We obtained extremely satisfactory scope looks. Endemic pot-bellied Striped Sparrows were much more obvious inhabitants of this appealing habitat and we also noted

Chipping Sparrow and a Mexican Cottontail. A nearby stretch of pine forest and evergreen scrub interspersed with open areas gave us a very well behaved Strickland's Woodpecker that we managed to scope at length as it posed in the bright morning sun. A couple of attractive Buff-breasted Flycatchers were foraging in a disused field and both Pygmy and White-breasted Nuthatches were showing off their acrobatics in the pines. A Lesser Roadrunner remained a leader only bird, sadly, but very attractive Western Bluebirds and Red Warblers made our hearts melt. A couple of striking Spotted Towhees of the distinctive green-backed form *macronyx* played hide and seek in the dense undergrowth and Lincoln's Sparrow and Say's Phoebe represented the migratory tribe. In late morning we drove to the famous Almoloya marshes which turned out to be very birdy. We saw a good selection of waterbirds including Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mexican Duck, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler and Pied-billed and Black-necked Grebes. Lots of Clark's Grebes graced the lake and we scoped several birds that had tiny young on their backs. Several female Northern Harriers were quartering over the reeds and we had great looks at a Sora. We only heard Virginia Rail and discovered a party of hiding Wilson's Snipe and singletons of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. The star attraction at Almoloya is not a waterbird however, but the reed inhabiting Black-polled Yellowthroat, which behaved ever so well by showing its distinctive black legs and unique head pattern. We also spotted Black Phoebe, Marsh Wren, Common Starling and many cock-tailed Song Sparrows feeding at the edge of the reedbeds. Icterids obviously had a great time here as large flocks of Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds (of the distinctive highland form) and scores of Brown-headed Cowbirds were swarming about.



The Black-polled Yellowthroat was the main target at the Almoloya marsh (Nigel Redman)

On our final morning in Mexico we visited the Bosque de Tlalpan, a protected area of scrubby woodland at the edge of town. As it was a Sunday morning, there were lots of joggers about, but we soon found a quiet track away from the hordes. It took a while to find the Hooded Yellowthroat, our main target, but with the help from a resident Dutch birder who knew the area very well, we obtained great looks at this localized endemic.

Unlike other Yellowthroats this species favours dry woodland, and is not attached to wetlands at all. We managed to add several other new birds for the tour, including Broad-billed Hummingbird, a lovely Black-throated Grey Warbler, Scott's and Bullock's Orioles, Canyon Towhee and several attractive Black-headed Grosbeaks. After a leisurely lunch and packing, we drove to the airport of this enormous conurbation and our ways parted. More beans anyone?



The Zapotec World Heritage Site of Monte Alban is an excellent birding site (Mark Van Beirs)



The glorious Spotted Nightingale-Thrush was very cooperative at El Triunfo (Mark Van Beirs)

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES RECORDED DURING THE TOUR

Species marked with the diamond symbol (◊) are either endemic to the country or local region or considered 'special' birds for some other reason (e.g. it is only seen on one or two Birdquest tours; it is difficult to see across all or most of its range; the local form is endemic or restricted-range and may in future be treated as a full species).

Species which were only seen on the pre-tour El Triunfo Extension are marked (E).

Species which were heard but not seen are indicated by the symbol (H).

Species which were not personally recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (NL).

Species which were only recorded by the leader are indicated by the symbol (LO).

Conservation threat categories and information are taken from *Threatened Birds of the World*, BirdLife International's magnificent book on the sad status of the rarest 10% of the world's avifauna, and updates on the BirdLife website: <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/home> (EW) = Extinct in the wild, (CR) = Critically Endangered, (EN) = Endangered, (VU) = Vulnerable, (NT) = Near Threatened, (DD) = Data Deficient.

The species names and taxonomy used in the report mostly follows Gill, F & D Donsker (Eds). 2017. IOC World Bird List (v 6.4). This list is updated several times annually and is available at <http://www.worldbirdnames.org>. Please note, this was the current version when the report checklist was created. Some alternative names are given in parentheses.

All of our checklists are powered by our partner iGoTerra (www.igoterra.com) who provide web and mobile applications for bird and wildlife enthusiasts and businesses. Their suite of services cover observations, rankings, lists, photos and trip management tools.

Thicket Tinamou ♦ *Crypturellus cinnamomeus* A couple of observations at El Triunfo. Heard elsewhere.

Slaty-breasted Tinamou *Crypturellus boucardi* (H)..We heard the distinctive call at Valle Nacional.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* Lots were seen at a marsh near Tuxtepec. See Note.

Gadwall *Anas strepera* Small numbers were at the Almoloya marshes.

American Wigeon *Anas americana* 30+ at Almoloya.

Mexican Duck ♦ *Anas diazi* Good looks at this speciality at Almoloya.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* The most regularly encountered duck.

Northern Shoveler *Anas clypeata* Good numbers were noted north of Tehuantepec and at Almoloya.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* Several were seen at Almoloya.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* Small numbers were at Teotitlan and at Almoloya.

Plain Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis vetula* Several showed quite well in the Sumidero Canyon.

West Mexican Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis poliocephala* Best sightings were at Laguna Colorada.

White-bellied Chachalaca ♦ *Ortalis leucogastra* Heard and glimpsed at Puerto Arista. See Note.



The fabled Horned Guan (Mark Van Beirs)

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens* Brief looks at Valle Nacional.
Highland Guan ♦ (Black Penelopina) *Penelopina nigra* (VU) Great looks at El Triunfo. Heard near San Cristobal.
Horned Guan ♦ *Oreophasis derbianus* (E) (EN) Fantastic views of this magnificent species at El Triunfo.
Long-tailed Wood Partridge ♦ *Dendrortyx macroura* Heard and glimpsed at Valle Nacional.
Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus* (E) (NT) Good looks at the race *coyolcos* on the way to El Triunfo.
Spotted Wood Quail ♦ *Odontophorus guttatus* (H) We heard a couple of coveys at Valle Nacional.



A calling Singing Quail at El Triunfo (Nigel Redman)

Singing Quail ♦ *Dactylortyx thoracicus* Splendid looks at El Triunfo and at the Sumidero Canyon.
Wedge-tailed Shearwater *Ardenna pacifica* A dark morph bird was seen off Puerto Angel.
Pink-footed Shearwater *Ardenna creatopus* (VU) 40+ were noted off Puerto Angel.
Townsend's Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus auricularis* (CR) Five showed quite well off Puerto Angel.
Galapagos Shearwater ♦ *Puffinus subalaris* 24 performed well off Puerto Angel.
Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* 25 were at the Teotitlan pond.
Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* Lots were seen at Almoloya.
Black-necked Grebe (Eared G) *Podiceps nigricollis* 15 showed at Almoloya.
Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii* Many pairs with small and larger young were at Almoloya.
Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* A few were seen in Chiapas.
American White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* Scattered sightings.
White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* Many were seen near Tuxtepec and at Almoloya. See Note.
Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* Singles were seen at Puerto Arista and near Tuxtepec.
Bare-throated Tiger Heron *Tigrisoma mexicanum* Great looks at this attractive species near Tuxtepec.
Boat-billed Heron *Cochlearius cochlearius* Ten showed very well in the mangroves at Puerto Arista.
Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis* (LO) One was seen in flight by Nigel at Almoloya.
Black-crowned Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* A single bird at Puerto Arista was our only observation.
Green Heron *Butorides virescens* Scattered sightings along our route.
Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* Too many... See Note.



Boat-billed Heron and White-tailed Kite (Mark Van Beirs)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* Scattered observations.

Great Egret (American G E) *Ardea [alba] egretta* Many.

Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens* (NT) Two were prancing about at Puerto Arista.

Tricolored Heron (Louisiana H) *Egretta tricolor* Small numbers.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* A few here and there.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* Scattered records.

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* Several nice encounters.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* Lots along the Pacific coast.

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* Good numbers along the Pacific coast. See Note.

Blue-footed Booby *Sula nebouxii* Ten or so showed well north of Tehuantepec.

Nazca Booby ♦ *Sula granti* A subadult inspected us off Puerto Angel.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* 400+ were seen off Puerto Angel (*brewsteri*).

Neotropic Cormorant (Olivaceous C) *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* Regular observations.

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* A single bird was at Puerto Arista.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* Very common.

Lesser Yellow-headed Vulture (Savanna V) *Cathartes burrovianus* Two were seen in Veracruz.

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* Extremely common.

King Vulture *Sarcoramphus papa* Singles were seen at El Triunfo and at Valle Nacional.

Western Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* Five sightings of this widespread piscivore.

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* Several. The one at Monte Alban showed especially well.

Black Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus tyrannus* (E) A distant bird was noted on the walk out of El Triunfo.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* Four observations of this northern migrant.

White-breasted Hawk ♦ *Accipiter chionogaster* (E) Superb views of one at the El Triunfo clearing. See Note.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* Three sightings of this northern migrant.

Northern Harrier (American H) *Circus hudsonius* Three females were quartering over the Almoloya reeds.

Snail Kite *Rostrhamus sociabilis* A female was seen at a marsh near Tuxtepec.

Crane Hawk *Geranospiza caerulescens* Excellent looks at this distinctive bird of prey above Puerto Angel.

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* A single bird showed at Puerto Arista.

Great Black Hawk *Buteogallus urubitinga* (E) Two were circling at Finca Prusia.

Roadside Hawk *Rupornis magnirostris* Small numbers.

White Hawk *Pseudastur albicollis* A single bird showed in the distance at Valle Nacional.

Grey Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* Two observations.

Broad-winged Hawk *Buteo platypterus* Regular observations of this migrant.

Short-tailed Hawk *Buteo brachyurus* Four observations. Both pale and dark morphs were seen.

Zone-tailed Hawk *Buteo albonotatus* Great looks at this Turkey Vulture mimic near Tuxtepec.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* A handful of observations.
Ruddy Crane ♦ *Laterallus ruber* (E) Heard and seen by some near Jaltenango.
Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola* (H) We heard it in the reeds at Almoloya.
Sora *Porzana carolina* Superb views of a curious bird at Almoloya.
Common Gallinule (Laughing G) *Gallinula galeata* Common at Almoloya.
American Coot *Fulica americana* Regular observations.
Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* Fair numbers were noted.



Foraging American Avocets (Mark Van Beirs)

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* A flock of c160 birds was found at Laguna Colorada.
American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* Six of these long distance migrants were at Laguna Colorada.
Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* A few observations.
Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa* 50+ at a marsh near Tuxtepec and a few elsewhere. See Note.
Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata* 12 showed well at Almoloya.
Whimbrel (Hudsonian W) *Numenius [phaeopus] hudsonicus* (H) We heard one at Puerto Arista.
Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* Just one at Almoloya.
Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* Just one together with the previous species at Almoloya.
Willet (Western W) *Tringa [semipalmata] inornata* 15 were seen at Laguna Colorada.
Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* Just a few encounters.
Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* c20 were noted at the Teotitlan pond.
Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor* A few at Laguna Colorada and many at the Almoloya marshes.
Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* Common along the Pacific coast.
Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* A single bird in breeding attire was at Puerto Angel. See Note.
Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* Fairly common along the Pacific coast.
Elegant Tern ♦ *Thalasseus elegans* (NT) Four showed well in a Royal Tern flock at Laguna Colorada.
Pomarine Jaeger (P Skua) *Stercorarius pomarinus* Good looks at two off Puerto Angel.
Rock Dove (introduced) *Columba livia*
Scaled Pigeon *Patagioenas speciosa* Scope views of a single bird at Valle Nacional.
Band-tailed Pigeon *Patagioenas fasciata* Great looks at El Triunfo. Also recorded elsewhere in the highlands.
Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* Regular.
Short-billed Pigeon ♦ *Patagioenas nigrirostris* (H) We heard it at Valle Nacional.
Eurasian Collared Dove (introduced) *Streptopelia decaocto* Fairly regular. It is obviously spreading in Mexico.
Inca Dove *Columbina inca* Common.

Common Ground Dove *Columbina passerina* (E) Only seen on our way to El Triunfo.

Ruddy Ground Dove *Columbina talpacoti* Regular sightings.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* Small numbers all along our route.



White-faced Quail Dove at El Triunfo (Nigel Redman)

White-faced Quail-Dove ♦ *Zentrygon albifacies* Excellent sightings at El Triunfo. Also heard at Valle Nacional.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* Three were seen at Puerto Arista.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* Common.

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* Regular encounters.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus* A very nice observation at Valle Nacional. See Note.

Lesser Roadrunner ♦ *Geococcyx velox* (LO) One showed briefly at La Cima near Mexico City.

Squirrel Cuckoo *Piaya cayana* Regular observations.

Pacific Screech Owl ♦ *Megascops cooperi* Splendid looks at this lovely species at Puerto Arista.

Middle American Screech Owl ♦ (Guatemalan S-O) *Megascops guatemalae* (H) We heard it at the Sumidero.

Fulvous Owl ♦ *Strix fulvescens* (E) Magnificent looks at this stunner at El Triunfo.

Mountain Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium gnoma* Scope views of this cutie at La Cumbre, near Oaxaca.

Central American Pygmy Owl ♦ *Glaucidium griseiceps*. A pair showed very well at Valle Nacional.

Ferruginous Pygmy Owl *Glaucidium brasilianum* Regular.

Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* Just a few.

Buff-collared Nightjar ♦ *Antrostomus ridgwayi* (H) We heard it at the Sumidero and at Monte Alban. See Note.

Mexican Whip-poor-will ♦ *Antrostomus arizonae* Splendid looks near San Cristobal and near Oaxaca.

Chestnut-collared Swift *Streptoprocne rutila* A few sightings.

White-collared Swift *Streptoprocne zonaris* Regular observations.

Vaux's Swift *Chaetura vauxi* A handful of sightings.

Mexican Hermit ♦ *Phaethornis mexicanus* Cracking views at one above Puerto Angel.



Fulvous Owl obliged at El Triunfo (Nigel Redman) and Green-fronted Hummingbird at Arriaga (Mark Van Beirs)

Stripe-throated Hermit *Phaethornis striigularis* A couple were seen in the El Ocote reserve.

Curve-winged Sabrewing ♦ (Wedge-tailed S) *Campylopterus curvipennis* A single bird showed near Cordoba.

Rufous Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus rufus* (E) Nice looks at this speciality at El Triunfo.

Violet Sabrewing ♦ *Campylopterus hemileucurus* (E) A male showed particularly well at El Triunfo.

Emerald-chinned Hummingbird ♦ *Abeillia abeillei* (E) Scope views of lekking males at El Triunfo.

Black-crested Coquette ♦ *Lophornis helenae* A female favoured a flowering tree at Valle Nacional.

Golden-crowned Emerald ♦ *Chlorostilbon auriceps* A pair was found in the Arriaga foothills.

Canivet's Emerald ♦ (Fork-tailed E) *Chlorostilbon canivetii* A handful of observations.

Oaxaca Hummingbird ♦ (Blue-capped H) *Eupherusa cyanophrys* (EN) Great views above Puerto Angel. See Note.

Dusky Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus sordidus* Regular in the Oaxaca area. See Note.

Broad-billed Hummingbird *Cynanthus latirostris* Several on our final morning in Mexico City.

Doubleday's Hummingbird ♦ *Cynanthus doubledayi* Regular along the Pacific coast.

Cinnamon Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia rutila* A few along the Pacific coast.

Rufous-tailed Hummingbird *Amazilia tzacatl* Two were noted in southern Veracruz.

White-bellied Emerald ♦ *Amazilia candida* Several showed well in the Caribbean foothills.

Azure-crowned Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia cyanocephala* Regular observations.

Green-fronted Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia viridifrons* Two performed beautifully in the Arriaga foothills.

Cinnamon-sided Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia wagneri* Scope views of this speciality above Puerto Angel.

Berylline Hummingbird ♦ *Amazilia beryllina* Regular.

Amethyst-throated Mountaingem ♦ (A-t Hummingbird) *Lampornis amethystinus* Two were seen in Chiapas.

Green-throated Mountaingem ♦ *Lampornis viridipallens* (E) Regular at El Triunfo.

White-eared Hummingbird ♦ *Basilinna leucotis* Splendid looks at La Cumbre near Oaxaca.

Garnet-throated Hummingbird ♦ *Lamprolaima rhami* Several. Best was the obliging male near San Cristobal.

Rivoli's Hummingbird ♦ *Eugenes fulgens* A handful of sightings.

Plain-capped Starthroat ♦ *Helioaster constantii* One was seen at Puerto Arista.

Long-billed Starthroat *Helioaster longirostris* One showed well above Puerto Angel.

Sparkling-tailed Woodstar ♦ *Tilmatura dupontii* (E) A cracking male obliged at El Triunfo.

Beautiful Sheartail ♦ (B Hummingbird) *Calothorax pulcher* Male and female were at the Yagul cactae.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* Regular. Mainly female plumaged birds were seen.

Bumblebee Hummingbird ♦ *Atthis heloisa* Scope views of this endemic jewel at Valle Nacional.

Wine-throated Hummingbird ♦ *Atthis ellioti* (E) Excellent scope studies at El Triunfo.

Resplendent Quetzal ♦ *Pharomachrus mocinno* (E) (NT) Fantastic looks at this stunning bird at El Triunfo.

Citreoline Trogon ♦ *Trogon citreolus* This endemic was regular along the Pacific coast.

Gartered Trogon (Northern Violaceous T) *Trogon caligatus* A handful of encounters.

Mountain Trogon ♦ *Trogon mexicanus* Splendid looks at several at La Cumbre. Also recorded elsewhere.

Collared Trogon *Trogon collaris* Regular.



Gartered (Nigel Redman) and Collared (Mark Van Beirs) Trogons were easy to see at the Sumidero Canyon

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* (E) Two were seen along a stream on our way to Jaltenango.

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* Three observations.

Blue-throated Motmot ♦ *Aspatha gularis* Scope views of 2 at El Triunfo. We heard it near San Cristobal. See Note.

Russet-crowned Motmot ♦ *Momotus mexicanus* Several very nice sightings of this speciality. See Note.



Lesson's Motmot and Merlin (Mark Van Beirs)

Lesson's Motmot ♦ (Blue-diademed M) *Momotus lessonii* Regular. Super views at an ant swarm at El Triunfo.

Wagler's Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus wagleri* Nice looks at this endemic above Puerto Angel.

Emerald Toucanet ♦ *Aulacorhynchus prasinus* Quite regular in the Chiapas forests.

Collared Aracari *Pteroglossus torquatus* Several nice encounters.

Keel-billed Toucan (Rainbow-billed T) *Ramphastos sulfuratus* A handful of sightings of this attractive species.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus* (E) A few were seen near El Triunfo.

Golden-cheeked Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes chrysogenys* Good looks near Puerto Angel. Endemic.

Grey-breasted Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes hypopolius* This Oaxaca endemic showed well at Teotitlan. See Note.

Velasquez's Woodpecker ◇ *Melanerpes santacruzi* Common and vociferous. See Note.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* Two observations of this northern migrant.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Dryobates scalaris* Only seen near Jaltenango and in Mexico City.

Strickland's Woodpecker ◇ *Leuconotopicus stricklandi* Perfect scope studies of a male at La Cima.

Hairy Woodpecker *Leuconotopicus villosus* (E) The dark race *sanctorum* was regular at El Triunfo.

Golden-olive Woodpecker *Colaptes rubiginosus* A couple of sightings of this widespread species.

Grey-crowned Woodpecker ◇ *Colaptes auricularis* (H) We heard it above Puerto Angel.

Northern Flicker *Colaptes auratus* Regular encounters including the race *mexicanoides* south of the Isthmus.

Lineated Woodpecker *Dryocopus lineatus* A few records. Best of all was the fabulous male at Puerto Arista.

Northern Crested Caracara (Northern C) *Caracara cheriway* Regular. Mexico's national bird!

Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans* Nice observations at El Triunfo and at Puerto Arista.

Barred Forest Falcon *Micrastur ruficollis* Regularly heard and one or two seen.

Collared Forest Falcon *Micrastur semitorquatus* A dark morph showed well near Cordoba.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* Regular encounters.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* Scope views of a perched male at Puerto Arista.

Bat Falcon *Falco rufigularis* A fast flying bird showed at Valle Nacional.



Peregrine (Mark Van Beirs); Yellowish Flycatcher (Nigel Redman)

Peregrine Falcon (Peregrine) *Falco peregrinus* Perfect scope views of a young bird at Puerto Arista (*tundrius*).

Orange-chinned Parakeet *Brotogeris jugularis* Good looks at Tuxtla Gutierrez and at Puerto Arista.

White-crowned Parrot ◇ *Pionus senilis* Regular observations.

White-fronted Amazon ◇ (W-f Parrot) *Amazona albifrons* Also quite regular.

Red-lore Amazon (R-l Parrot) *Amazona autumnalis* Several showed well in Valle Nacional.

Olive-throated Parakeet ◇ *Eupsittula nana* A handful were noted in Valle Nacional.

Orange-fronted Parakeet ◇ *Eupsittula canicularis* Several observations along the Pacific coast.

Green Parakeet ◇ *Psittacara holochlorus* Several flocks were seen in inland Chiapas.

Pacific Parakeet ◇ *Psittacara strenuus* Four birds showed briefly at Puerto Arista.

Rufous-breasted Spinetail ◇ *Synallaxis erythrothorax* Great views, eventually, at one in Valle Nacional.

Scaly-throated Foliage-gleaner *Anabacerthia variegaticeps* Regular observations in Chiapas.

Ruddy Foliage-gleaner *Automolus rubiginosus* Good looks at El Triunfo and at Valle Nacional.

Tawny-throated Leaf-tosser *Sclerurus mexicanus* (E) Two were seen at El Triunfo.

Olivaceous Woodcreeper *Sittasomus griseicapillus* A few observations of this widespread species.

Strong-billed Woodcreeper *Xiphocolaptes promeropirhynchus* One showed well at La Cumbre near Oaxaca.

Ivory-billed Woodcreeper ◇ *Xiphorhynchus flavigaster* Regularly recorded.

Spotted Woodcreeper *Xiphorhynchus erythropygius* (E) Regular at El Triunfo.

Spot-crowned Woodcreeper *Lepidocolaptes affinis* A handful of observations in the highlands.

Barred Antshrike *Thamnophilus doliatus* (H) We heard it several times, but were always busy with other birds.

Greenish Elaenia *Myiopagis viridicata* Nice views near Jaltenango and heard elsewhere.

Yellow-bellied Elaenia *Elaenia flavogaster* This one showed well in Valle Nacional.

Northern Beardless Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* A handful of sightings.

Paltry Tyrannulet ♦ *Zimmerius vilissimus* (E) Nice views of this speciality at El Triunfo.

Ochre-bellied Flycatcher *Mionectes oleagineus* (E) Three showed particularly well near Jaltenango.

Eye-ringed Flatbill *Rhynchocyclus brevirostris* (E) Several were seen at El Triunfo.

Yellow-olive Flatbill (Y-o Flycatcher) *Tolmomyias sulphurescens* Two sightings of this widespread species.

Belted Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus callizonus* (NT) Nice looks for most at El Sumidero. A speciality! See Note.

Pileated Flycatcher ♦ *Xenotriccus mexicanus* Seen well at Yagul and heard at Monte Alban. See Note.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* Several were found at Almoloya.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* This migrant was seen at La Cima.

Northern Tufted Flycatcher *Mitrephanes phaeocercus* A handful of observations in the highlands.

Olive-sided Flycatcher *Contopus cooperi* (NT) A single sighting above Puerto Angel.

Greater Pewee *Contopus pertinax* Several nice encounters.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* (E) Two showed well at El Triunfo.

Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus* Regular observations.

Hammond's Flycatcher *Empidonax hammondii* Quite common in the highlands.

American Dusky Flycatcher *Empidonax oberholseri* Seen well near Oaxaca and in Mexico City.

Pacific-slope Flycatcher *Empidonax difficilis* One was identified above Puerto Angel.

Yellowish Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax flavescens* (E) Regular at El Triunfo.

Buff-breasted Flycatcher ♦ *Empidonax fulvifrons* Excellent looks at two at La Cima. An easy to identify Empid!

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* Regular and always attractive.

Piratic Flycatcher *Legatus leucophaeus* Good views at Valle Nacional.

Social Flycatcher *Myiozetetes similis* Common.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* Quite common in the lowlands.

Boat-billed Flycatcher *Megarynchus pitangua* A few sightings in the lowlands.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* Everywhere!

Couch's Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus couchii* Nice views of two at Valle Nacional.

Cassin's Kingbird *Tyrannus vociferans* Regular in the Oaxaca area.

Thick-billed Kingbird ♦ *Tyrannus crassirostris* We only saw it near Oaxaca.

Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis* (E) Only seen near Jaltenango.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* Many of these lovely birds were at Puerto Arista.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus savana* We found one near Tuxtepec.

Dusky-capped Flycatcher *Myiarchus tuberculifer* Regular.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* A few in drier areas.

Nutting's Flycatcher ♦ *Myiarchus nuttingi* Several encounters along the Pacific coast.

Brown-crested Flycatcher *Myiarchus tyrannulus* Small numbers were noted.

Bright-rumped Attila (Flammulated A) *Attila [spadiceus] flammulatus* Close up looks above Puerto Angel.

Long-tailed Manakin ♦ *Chiroxiphia linearis* (E) Nice looks at two near Jaltenango.

Masked Tityra *Tityra semifasciata* Regular.

Rose-throated Becard *Pachyramphus aglaiae* A handful of encounters.

Rufous-browed Peppershrike *Cyclarhis gujanensis* A few records of this widespread bird.

Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius melitophrys* Great scope studies of this beauty above Puerto Angel.

Green Shrike-Vireo ♦ *Vireolanius pulchellus* Superb views of two at El Ocote.

Yellow-throated Vireo *Vireo flavifrons* Two observations of this attractive migrant.

Plumbeous Vireo *Vireo plumbeus* A couple of sightings.

Cassin's Vireo *Vireo cassinii* Fairly regular.

Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* Just a few.

Hutton's Vireo *Vireo huttoni* Nice views near San Cristobal.

Golden Vireo ♦ *Vireo hypochryseus* Several very nice observations of this endemic.

Warbling Vireo *Vireo gilvus* Regular.

Brown-capped Vireo *Vireo leucophrys* (E) Only seen at El Triunfo.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* Seen and heard in the Tuxtla Gutierrez area.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* (H) We heard it in the lower Valle Nacional.

Lesser Greenlet *Hylophilus decurtatus* Several observations of this little tike.

Azure-hooded Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca cucullata* Glimpses at Valle Nacional.

Black-throated Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca pumilo* (E) Excellent studies at El Triunfo.

Dwarf Jay ♦ *Cyanolyca nanus* (VU) Fantastic views at this endemic at La Cumbre.

Green Jay *Cyanocorax luxuosus* Regular.

Brown Jay *Psilorhinus morio* Regular on the Caribbean side. See Note.

White-throated Magpie-Jay ♦ *Calocitta formosa* Fairly common on the Pacific slope. See Note.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri* Quite common in the highland pine forest. See Note.

Unicolored Jay ♦ *Aphelocoma unicolor* Several excellent observations.

Woodhouse's Scrub Jay ♦ *Aphelocoma woodhouseii* Nice looks near Oaxaca and at Mexico City.

Northern Raven (Common R) *Corvus corax* Three sightings of this widespread bird.

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* Two of these migrants showed at Valle Nacional.

Grey Silky-flycatcher ♦ (G Silky) *Ptiliogonys cinereus* A fairly common inhabitant of the highlands.

Mexican Chickadee ♦ *Poecile sclateri* Seen near Oaxaca and in Mexico City. See Note.

Sand Martin (Bank Swallow) *Riparia riparia* Two of these migrants were flying over a lake near Tuxtepec.

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* A few were at the same lake.

Mangrove Swallow *Tachycineta albilinea* Several showed briefly at a river near Tuxtepec.

Violet-green Swallow *Tachycineta thalassina* Regular observations.

Grey-breasted Martin *Progne chalybea* Especially common above Puerto Angel.

Black-capped Swallow ♦ *Notiochelidon pileata* Nice looks at eight near San Cristobal.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* Quite common.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* Regular.

American Bushtit *Psaltiriparus minimus* This tiny species was quite common. See Note.

Golden-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa* One was seen at Valle Nacional.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Giant Wren (Nigel Redman)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus calendula* Several excellent sightings.

Band-backed Wren *Campylorhynchus zonatus* Great looks near San Cristobal.

Grey-barred Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus megalopterus* Mega looks at a party at La Cumbre.

Giant Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus chiapensis* Fairly common in the Puerto Arista area. See Note.

Sclater's Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus humilis* Regular along the Pacific coast north of the Isthmus. See Note.

Boucard's Wren ♦ *Campylorhynchus jocosus* This endemic showed well at Teotitlan. See Note.

Rock Wren *Salpinctes obsoletus* Several nice encounters at archaeological sites.

Canyon Wren *Catherpes mexicanus* Seen near San Cristobal and heard at Mexico City.

Sumichrast's Wren ♦ (Slender-billed W) *Hylorchilus sumichrasti* (NT) Superb looks at this cute species. See Note.

Nava's Wren ♦ *Hylorchilus navai* (VU) Fabulous views of this species full of character at El Ocote. See Note.

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris* Nice looks at a couple at Almoloya.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* Regular near Oaxaca.

Happy Wren ♦ *Pheugopedius felix* A great showing near Puerto Angel.



Sumichrast's Wren (Nigel Redman); Pygmy Nuthatches (Mark Van Beirs)

- Spot-breasted Wren** *Pheugopedius maculipectus* Nice views at El Ocote. Regularly heard.
- Banded Wren** ♦ *Thryophilus pleurostictus* Regular along the Pacific coast.
- Rufous-and-white Wren** *Thryophilus rufalbus* (E) Nice looks at El Triunfo.
- Cabanis's Wren** ♦ *Cantorchilus modestus* A few observations of this recent split from Plain Wren.
- House Wren (Northern H W)** *Troglodytes [aeson] aeson* Regular north of the Isthmus.
- House Wren** ♦ (Brown-throated H W) *Troglodytes [aeson] brunneicollis* (H) We heard it at La Cima.
- House Wren (Southern H W)** *Troglodytes [aeson] musculus* A few south of the Isthmus.
- Rufous-browed Wren** ♦ *Troglodytes rufociliatus* Good views eventually for all near San Cristobal.
- White-bellied Wren** ♦ *Uropsila leucogastra* (H) We heard it at the El Ocote reserve.
- White-breasted Wood Wren** *Henicorhina leucosticta* Regular in the foothills.
- Grey-breasted Wood Wren** *Henicorhina leucophrys* Regular in the highlands.
- Long-billed Gnatwren** *Ramphocaenus melanurus* Good views of this widespread species at Valle Nacional.
- Blue-grey Gnatcatcher** *Poliophtila caerulea* Fairly common.
- White-lored Gnatcatcher** ♦ *Poliophtila albiloris* Quite common on the Pacific slope.
- Pygmy Nuthatch** *Sitta pygmaea* Excellent close up views at La Cima.



White-breasted Nuthatch (Mark Van Beirs); Ocellated Thrasher (Nigel Redman)

- White-breasted Nuthatch** *Sitta carolinensis* One performed very well at La Cima.
- Brown Creeper (B Treecreeper)** *Certhia americana* A couple of sightings in highland forest.
- Grey Catbird** *Dumetella carolinensis* Just two records of this migrant.
- Northern Mockingbird** *Mimus polyglottos* (H) We heard it in Mexico City.
- Tropical Mockingbird** *Mimus gilvus* A few in Chiapas.
- Ocellated Thrasher** ♦ *Toxostoma ocellatum* Splendid looks at this speciality near Oaxaca.
- Blue Mockingbird** ♦ *Melanotis caerulescens* Regular north of the Isthmus.

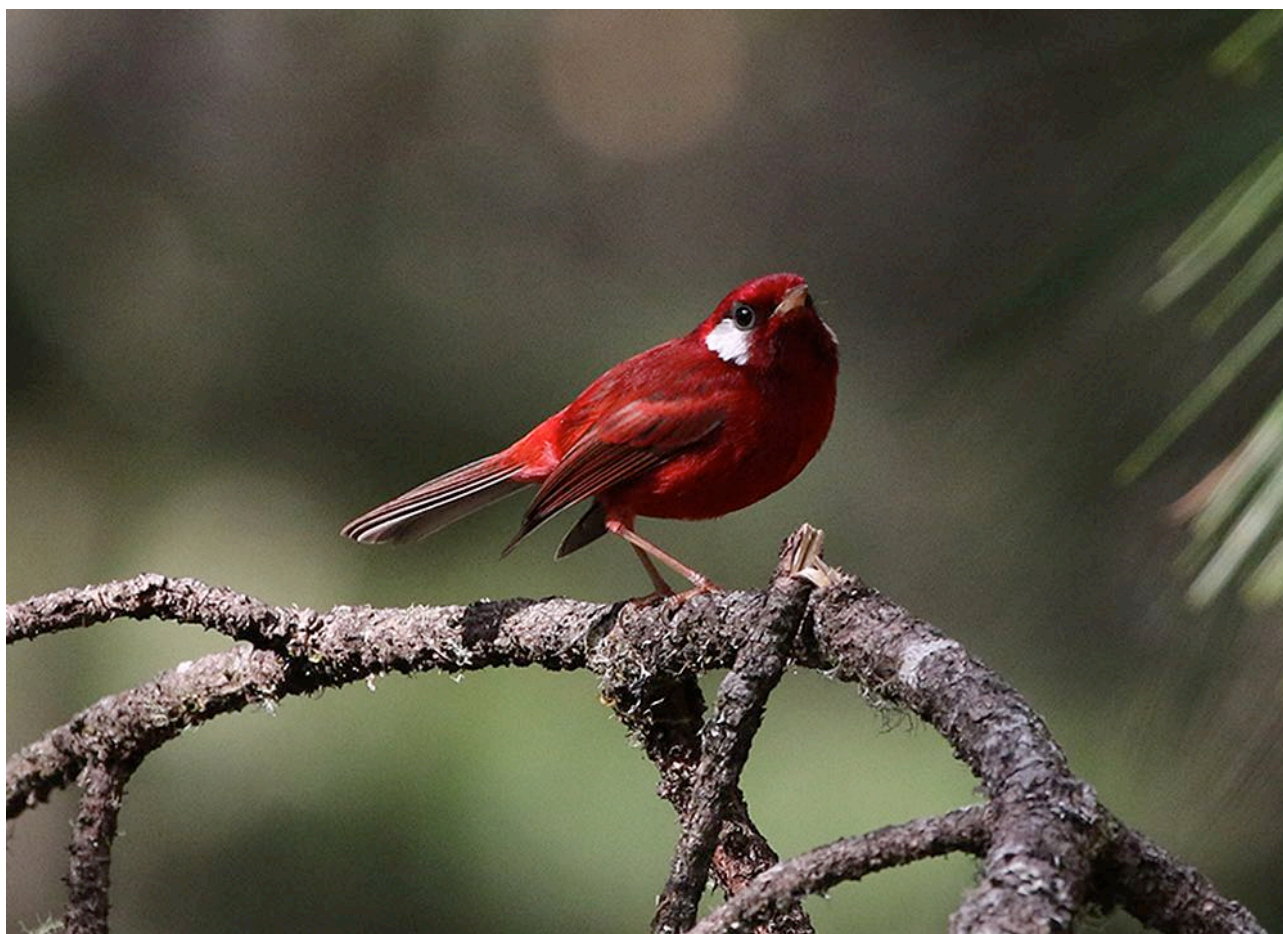
Blue-and-white Mockingbird ♦ *Melanotis hypoleucus* A nice performance near San Cristobal. See Note.
Common Starling (introduced) *Sturnus vulgaris* A few at Almoloya.
Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* This beauty showed well near San Cristobal.
Western Bluebird *Sialia mexicana* Several could be scoped at La Cima.



Brown-backed Solitaire (Mark Van Beirs); Spotted Nightingale-Thrush (Nigel Redman)

Brown-backed Solitaire ♦ *Myadestes occidentalis* Common in the Chiapas and Oaxaca highlands. See Note.
Slate-coloured Solitaire ♦ *Myadestes unicolor* Several nice encounters on the Caribbean slope.
Orange-billed Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus aurantiirostris* (H) We heard it at several venues.
Russet Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus occidentalis* Good looks at two at La Cumbre.
Ruddy-capped Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus frantzii* (E) Regular observations at El Triunfo.
Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush ♦ *Catharus mexicanus* One showed quite well in the Valle Nacional.
Spotted Nightingale-Thrush *Catharus dryas* (E) Many marvellous looks at El Triunfo. A real jewel!
Swainson's Thrush *Catharus ustulatus* A couple of sightings of this migrant.
Hermit Thrush *Catharus guttatus* Several encounters.
Wood Thrush *Hylocichla mustelina* (E) (NT) A single bird was seen well at El Triunfo.
Black Thrush ♦ (B Robin) *Turdus infuscatus* Regular at El Triunfo, but also seen elsewhere in the highlands.
Mountain Thrush ♦ (M Robin) *Turdus plebejus* A few encounters.
Clay-coloured Thrush (C-c Robin) *Turdus grayi* Many!
White-throated Thrush (W-t Robin) *Turdus assimilis* Just a few sightings.
Rufous-backed Thrush ♦ *Turdus rufopalliatus* Several very nice observations north of the Isthmus.
Rufous-collared Thrush ♦ *Turdus rufitorques* Easy to see in the San Cristobal area. See Note.
American Robin *Turdus migratorius* Regular along the latter part of our route.
House Sparrow (introduced) *Passer domesticus* Common.
Olive Warbler ♦ *Peucedramus taeniatus* This very special species showed very well at La Cumbre. See Note.
Buff-bellied Pipit (American P) *Anthus rubescens* Several were feeding on the mud of the Teotitlan pond.
Hooded Grosbeak ♦ *Hesperiphona abeillei* (E) Scope views of this speciality at El Triunfo.
House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* Regular in Oaxaca and Mexico City.
Red Crossbill (Common C) *Loxia curvirostra* Several near San Cristobal and also heard at La Cima.
Lesser Goldfinch (Dark-backed G) *Spinus psaltria* Small numbers were seen along our route.
Black-headed Siskin ♦ *Spinus notatus* (E) Two were noted on our way to El Triunfo.
Scrub Euphonia *Euphonia affinis* Regular.
Yellow-throated Euphonia ♦ *Euphonia hirundinacea* A handful of observations.
Elegant Euphonia (Blue-hooded E) *Euphonia elegantissima* Quite common in the southern highlands.
Olive-backed Euphonia ♦ *Euphonia gouldi* Good looks at two at the El Ocote reserve.
Blue-crowned Chlorophonia ♦ *Chlorophonia occipitalis* (E) Regular and very attractive at El Triunfo.
Ovenbird *Seiurus aurocapilla* Three sightings of this northern migrant.

Worm-eating Warbler *Helmitheros vermivorum* (E) One was seen at El Triunfo.
Golden-winged Warbler *Vermivora chrysoptera* (E) (NT) Good looks at this beauty at El Triunfo.
Blue-winged Warbler *Vermivora cyanoptera* A single bird showed well near Cordoba.
Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* Regular.
Crescent-chested Warbler ♦ *Oreothlypis superciliosa* Fairly common in the southern highlands.
Tennessee Warbler *Leiothlypis peregrina* A regularly encountered migrant.
Orange-crowned Warbler *Leiothlypis celata* A few sightings of this subtly-plumaged migrant.
Nashville Warbler *Leiothlypis ruficapilla* Regular sightings.
Grey-crowned Yellowthroat *Geothlypis poliocephala* Just two records.
MacGillivray's Warbler *Geothlypis tolmiei* A handful of observations.
Kentucky Warbler *Geothlypis formosa* This skulker showed well at the El Ocote reserve.
Black-poll'd Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis speciosa* (EN) Splendid looks at this endemic at Almoloya. See Note.
Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* A few encounters.
Hooded Yellowthroat ♦ *Geothlypis nelsoni* Great looks at this special species at Mexico City.
Hooded Warbler *Setophaga citrina* Great looks at this handsome species near Cordoba.
American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* Regular.
Tropical Parula *Setophaga pitiaiyumi* A few sightings.
Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* Several showed well in the Sumidero Canyon.
American Yellow Warbler (Yellow W) *Setophaga aestiva* Fairly common.
Audubon's Warbler *Setophaga auduboni* Regular.
Grace's Warbler *Setophaga graciae* A few in pine forests.
Black-throated Grey Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens* Very nice views of this attractive migrant in Mexico City.
Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* Fairly common.
Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* A few observations.
Golden-cheeked Warbler ♦ *Setophaga chrysoparia* (EN) A much appreciated male showed well near San Cristobal.



The fabulous Red Warbler (Nigel Redman)

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* A regular migrant.
Fan-tailed Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus lachrymosus* Very nice looks at army ant swarms in the Sumidero Canyon.
Rufous-capped Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus rufifrons* Regular.
Golden-browed Warbler ♦ *Basileuterus belli* This very attractive species showed very well in the highlands.
Golden-crowned Warbler *Basileuterus culicivorus* This widespread species was seen several times.
Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* Common.
Red Warbler ♦ *Cardellina rubra* Brilliant views of this magnificent species near Oaxaca and Mexico City.
Pink-headed Warbler ♦ *Cardellina versicolor* (VU) One of the birds of the tour! Marvellous views. See Note.
Painted Whitestart ♦ (P Redstart) *Myioborus pictus* This jewel showed well in the Teotitlan scrub.
Slate-throated Whitestart (S-t Redstart) *Myioborus miniatus* Fairly common.
Yellow-breasted Chat *Icteria virens* Two observations of this attractive migrant.
Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* Hundreds were swarming at Almoloya.
Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* Several sightings at Puerto Arista.
Yellow-billed Cacique *Amblycercus holosericeus* Good looks at two at Valle Nacional.
Mexican Cacique ♦ (Yellow-winged C) *Cassiculus melanicterus* A few were seen along the Pacific coast.
Chestnut-headed Oropendola *Psarocolius wagleri* Small numbers were noted at Valle Nacional.
Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma* Great looks at displaying birds at Valle Nacional. See Note.
Scott's Oriole *Icterus parisorum* Two were seen in Mexico City on the final morning of the tour.
Audubon's Oriole ♦ *Icterus graduacauda* A single of the *dickeyae* form was seen above Puerto Angel.
Altamira Oriole ♦ *Icterus gularis* Regular.
Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii* Several of these migrants were found in Mexico City.
Streak-backed Oriole ♦ *Icterus pustulatus* Common.
Black-backed Oriole ♦ *Icterus abeillei* Excellent looks at this smart species near Oaxaca.
Baltimore Oriole *Icterus galbula* A handful of observations.
Yellow-tailed Oriole *Icterus mesomelas* Good looks at two in the lower Valle Nacional.
Spot-breasted Oriole ♦ *Icterus pectoralis* Two showed well at Puerto Arista.
Bar-winged Oriole ♦ *Icterus maculialatus* A young male was foraging in a flowering tree at the Sumidero. See Note.
Black-vented Oriole ♦ *Icterus wagleri* Several performed beautifully in the Teotitlan scrub.
Black-cowled Oriole ♦ *Icterus prothemelas* A few were found in Valle Nacional.
Orchard Oriole *Icterus spurius* This migrant was found in small numbers near Jaltenango and at Puerto Aristo.
Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* (E) Fairly common in a marsh near Jaltenango.
Red-winged Blackbird ♦ (Bicoloured B) *Agelaius [phoeniceus] gubernator* Common at the Almoloya marshes.
Giant Cowbird *Molothrus oryzivorus* (E) One was seen near Jaltenango.
Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* Regular observations.
Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* Many at the Almoloya marshes.
Melodious Blackbird *Dives dives* Common and widespread.
Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* Very common and very vocal.
Bananaquit *Coereba flaveola* Just a few sightings of this tiny species.
Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia* Common at the Almoloya marshes.
Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii* Just two observations.
Rufous-collared Sparrow *Zonotrichia capensis* Common in the highlands south of the Isthmus.
Yellow-eyed Junco ♦ *Junco phaeonotus* A handful of sightings.
Sierra Madre Sparrow ♦ *Xenospiza baileyi* (EN) Perfect scope views of this special species at La Cima. See Note.
Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* A single bird was found in Mexico City.
Stripe-headed Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea ruficauda* Very nice views in the Arriaga foothills.
Bridled Sparrow ♦ *Peucaea mystacalis* This attractive endemic was scoped at Teotitlan. See Note.
Cinnamon-tailed Sparrow ♦ (Sumichrast's S) *Peucaea sumichrasti* (NT) Great views near Tehuantepec. See Note.
Rusty Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila rufescens* Just a few encounters.
Oaxaca Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila notosticta* It took a while, but eventually we had great looks at Monte Alban.
Striped Sparrow ♦ *Oriturus superciliosus* Many in the Mexico City area.
Collared Towhee ♦ *Pipilo ocai* Fabulous looks at a pair at La Cumbre.
Spotted Towhee *Pipilo maculatus* Several nice sightings.
White-throated Towhee ♦ *Melozona albigollis* Regular observations in the Oaxaca area. See Note.
Canyon Towhee ♦ *Melozona fusca* A few were seen in Mexico City.



A pair of Collared Towhees (Nigel Redman)

Prevost's Ground Sparrow ♦ *Melospiza biarcuata* (E) Very nice views of this cutie near Jaltenango.

White-eared Ground Sparrow ♦ *Melospiza leucotis* (E) Good looks near Jaltenango.

Olive Sparrow ♦ *Arremonops rufivirgatus* Several were noted in the Sumidero Canyon.

Chestnut-capped Brushfinch *Arremon brunneinucha* (E) Regular at El Triunfo.

Rufous-capped Brushfinch ♦ *Atlapetes pileatus* Several pleasant observations in the highlands.

White-naped Brushfinch ♦ *Atlapetes albinucha* Good looks at a nestmaterial collecting bird at Valle Nacional.

White-naped Brushfinch ♦ (Yellow-throated B) *Atlapetes [albinucha] gutturalis* Nice views at Huitepec.

Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus flavopectus* Common. See Note.

Crimson-collared Tanager ♦ *Ramphocelus sanguinolentus* This striking species showed well at Valle Nacional.

Blue-grey Tanager *Thraupis episcopus* Just a few observations.

Yellow-winged Tanager ♦ *Thraupis abbas* Regular sightings. See Note.

Cabanis's Tanager ♦ (Azure-rumped T) *Tangara cabanisi* (EN) Frustrating views of this speciality at El Triunfo.

Red-legged Honeycreeper *Cyanerpes cyaneus* Regular.

Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer ♦ *Diglossa baritula* Three excellent observations in the highlands.

Black-headed Saltator *Saltator atriceps* Several encounters with vocal parties.

Buff-throated Saltator *Saltator maximus* A few observations of this widespread bird.

Blue-black Grassquit *Volatinia jacarina* (E) A single encounter near Jaltenango.

Variable Seedeater *Sporophila corvina* A displaying male was admired at length at Valle Nacional.

White-collared Seedeater *Sporophila torqueola* Several observations.

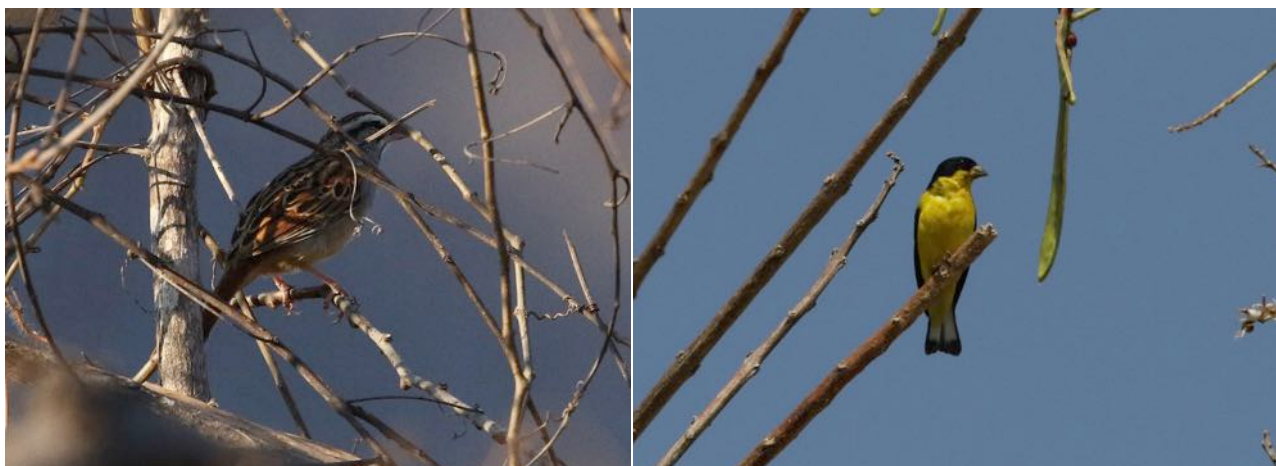
Flame-coloured Tanager ♦ *Piranga bidentata* (E) Glorious looks at males and females at El Triunfo.

Hepatic Tanager (Northern H T) *Piranga hepatica* A few sightings.

Summer Tanager *Piranga rubra* Regular in small numbers.

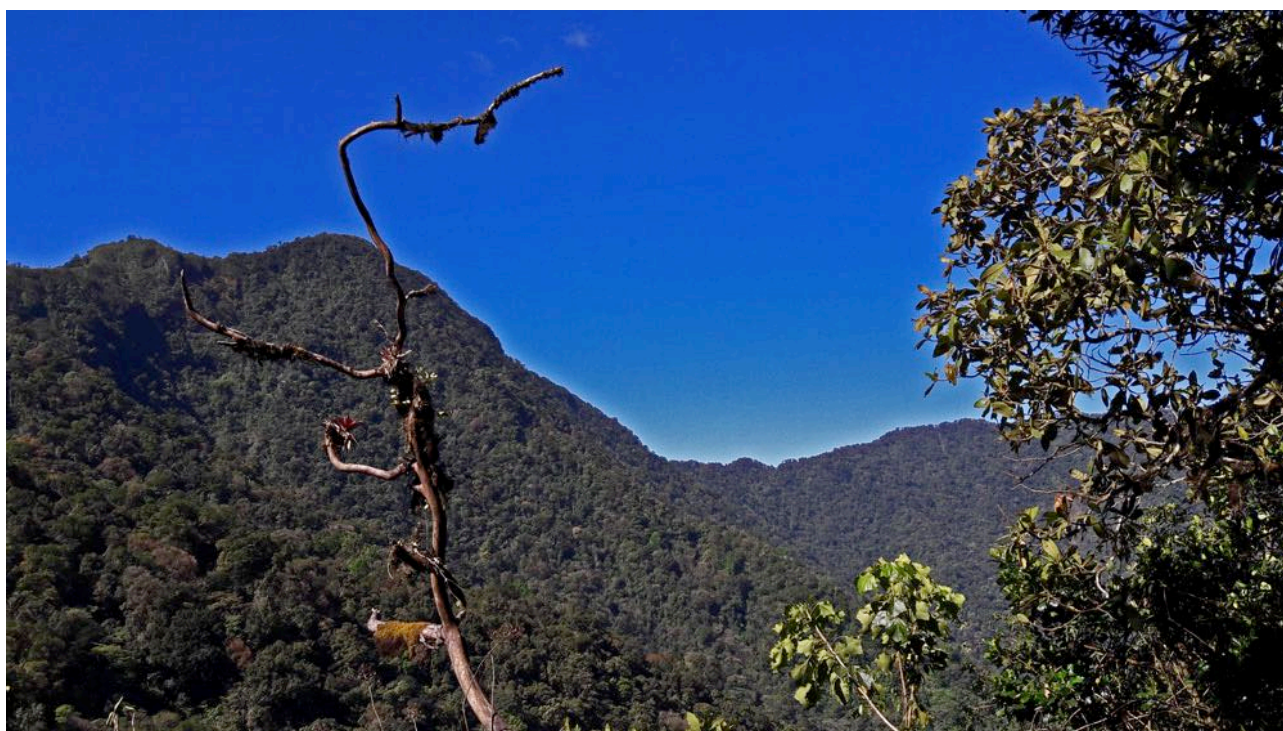
Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* Fairly common.

White-winged Tanager *Piranga leucoptera* A handful of sightings of this attractive species.



Cinnamon-tailed Sparrow and Lesser Goldfinch (Nigel Redman)

Red-crowned Ant Tanager *Habia rubica* Two were seen near Cordoba.
Red-throated Ant Tanager ♦ *Habia fuscicauda* Several nice encounters.
Yellow Grosbeak ♦ (Mexican Y G) *Pheucticus chrysopheplus* The *aurantiacus* form was common at El Triunfo.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak *Pheucticus ludovicianus* This migrant was seen in small numbers.
Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* Several showed well in Mexico City.
Red-breasted Chat ♦ *Granatellus venustus* A cracking male performed very well in the Sumidero.
Black-faced Grosbeak ♦ *Caryothraustes poliogaster* Several were noted at the El Ocote reserve.
Blue Bunting ♦ *Cyanocompsa parellina* Regular.
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea* Two males showed quite well.
Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* Regular observations.
Painted Bunting ♦ *Passerina ciris* (NT) Several very nice sightings.
Rose-bellied Bunting ♦ (Rosita's B) *Passerina rositae* (NT) Perfect looks in the Arriaga foothills. See Note.
Orange-breasted Bunting ♦ *Passerina leclancherii* This truly beautiful species showed very well.



El Triunfo scenery (Mark Van Beirs)

MAMMALS

Northern Tamandua *Tamandua mexicana* One was found sunning itself in a large tree at Puerto Arista.

Mexican Cottontail *Sylvilagus cunicularius* Seen near Mexico City.

Mexican Grey Squirrel (Red-bellied S) *Sciurus aureogaster* Regular.

Deppe's Squirrel *Sciurus deppei* (E) Regular at El Triunfo.

Cacomistle (Southern Ringtail) *Bassariscus astutus* (H) We heard it at El Triunfo.

White-nosed Coati *Nasua narica* (E) Two were seen on the Tanager hike at El Triunfo.

Central American Spider Monkey (Black-handed S M) *Ateles geoffroyi* (H) We heard a party at El Triunfo.

Common Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* 20+ could be admired on our boat trip off Puerto Angel.

Collared Peccary (Javelina) *Pecari tajacu* (E) Several were seen at El Triunfo.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* Several were seen in the Sumidero Canyon.



At the El Triunfo trailhead (Mark Van Beirs)

OTHER

Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas* At least 15 showed well on our pelagic off Puerto Angel.

Godman's Pit Viper *Cerrophidion godmani* One showed well along the Palo Gordo trail at El Triunfo.



Ferruginous Pygmy Owl (Nigel Redman)

NOTES TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis*

The epithet *autumnalis* (= autumnal) refers to the orange, yellow and brown colours of this species.

White-bellied Chachalaca *Ortalis leucogastra*

A Pacific coast speciality, occurring from Chiapas (Mexico) till Nicaragua. It is one of the distinctive species of the North Central American Pacific slope Endemic Bird Area (EBA 017), defined by BirdLife International in "Endemic Bird Areas of the World - Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation".

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*

The scientific epithet is derived from the onomatopoeic French name chihi for this species, given by Vieillot in 1817.

Western Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*

First noted in the New World in Suriname in 1877, after which a spectacular expansion over the whole continent followed. The main expansion in Mexico was in the 1960's and by the early 1970's this species was well established all over the Mexican mainland.

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens*

These wonderful and spectacular kleptoparasites with their highly distinctive flight silhouette were a real feature of the Pacific coast. Frigatebirds have the lowest wing-loading (low weight in contrast to large wing area) of all birds, enabling them to be amongst the most nimble of fliers.



A male Vermilion Flycatcher (Nigel Redman)

White-breasted Hawk *Accipiter chionogaster*

This distinctive taxon is endemic to Chiapas and northern Central America.

Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*

The name jacana is derived from the Tupi (Brazilian) Indian word jasaná, so the right pronunciation should really be 'jasaná'. The Portuguese spelling is jaçaná.

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*

The single bird in breeding plumage at Puerto Angel was obviously travelling from its wintering haunts off Chile to the nesting grounds in the northern US and central Canada. "Pipizcan" was the name given by Mexican Indians to a sort of gull. The bird is named after John Franklin (1786-1847), a Royal Navy officer and arctic explorer, who made two overland Canadian expeditions. He also led a disastrous expedition to search for the North-West passage, on which every man perished.

Pheasant Cuckoo *Dromococcyx phasianellus*

This is one of only three parasitic Neotropical cuckoos, laying its eggs mainly in nests of Tyrannid flycatchers.

Buff-collared Nightjar *Caprimulgus ridgwayi*

The species is sometimes known as Cookacheea or Tucuchillo.

Oaxaca Hummingbird (Blue-capped H) *Eupherusa cyanophrys*

A highly localized hummer that is one of the characteristic species of the Sierra Madre del Sur Endemic Bird Area (EBA 009).

Dusky Hummingbird *Cynanthus sordidus*

This Mexican endemic is one of the distinctive species of the Balsas region and interior Oaxaca Endemic Bird Area (EBA 008), defined by BirdLife International in "Endemic Bird Areas of the World - Priorities for Biodiversity Conservation".

Blue-throated Motmot *Aspatha gularis*

It is one of the distinctive species of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Russet-crowned Motmot *Momotus mexicanus*

One of the local names is "reloj" (watch, clock), because of the rhythmic tail movement.

Grey-breasted Woodpecker *Centurus hypopolius*:

This cactus-dwelling endemic of the Oaxaca area is one of the distinctive species of the Balsas region and interior Oaxaca Endemic Bird Area (EBA 008).

Velasquez's Woodpecker *Centurus santacruzi*

A recent split from Golden-fronted Woodpecker *C. aurifrons*. The races observed include *grateloupensis* (Amatlan and the Sierra de Juarez) and *polygrammus* (Isthmus).

Belted Flycatcher *Xenotriccus callizonus*

This rarely seen Central American endemic is one of the characteristic species of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Pileated Flycatcher *Xenotriccus mexicanus*

This localized and easy to miss bird is one of the distinctive species of the Balsas region and interior Oaxaca Endemic Bird Area (EBA 008).

Brown Jay *Cyanocorax morio*

We saw the nominate race in northern Chiapas and the race *palliatu*s in Amatlan and the Sierra de Juarez.

White-throated Magpie-Jay *Calocitta formosa*

We saw the race *azurea* in Chiapas and the nominate race in the Oaxaca lowlands.

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*

We saw the race *ridgwayi* in the Chiapas highlands. The species is named after Georg Wilhelm Steller (1709-1746), German naturalist and explorer in Russian service who took part in Vitus Bering's expedition to Alaska, 1740-1742.

Mexican Chickadee *Parus sclateri*

We saw the race *rayi* near Oaxaca and the nominate race near Mexico City.

American Bushtit *Psaltiriparus minimus*

We observed the race *melanotis* near San Cristobal and *personatus* near Mexico City.

Giant Wren *Campylorhynchus chiapensis*

An appropriate scientific name. This species is endemic to the Chiapas coast and is one of the characteristic species of the North Central American Pacific slope Endemic Bird Area (EBA 017).

Sclater's Wren *Campylorhynchus humilis*

This is a recent split in the Rufous-naped Wren *C. rufinucha* complex

Boucard's Wren *Campylorhynchus jocosus*

The specific scientific name *jocosus* stems from the Latin word *iocosus* (merry, humorous) and probably relates to the rather exuberant vocalizations of this species.

Sumichrast's Wren *Hylorchilus sumichrasti*

Sumichrast's Wren is endemic to west-central Veracruz, north Oaxaca and extreme east Puebla and its range covers only c6000 km². The bird is named after the Mexican naturalist and field worker Francis Sumichrast (1828-1882).

Nava's Wren *Hylorchilus nava*

It has a range of only c4000 km² in easternmost Veracruz, west Chiapas and east Oaxaca and is restricted to karst outcrops. It is one of the distinctive species of the Los Tuxtlas and Uxpanapa Endemic Bird Area (EBA 013). The bird is named after Juan Nava Solario, a 20th century Mexican naturalist.

Blue-and-white Mockingbird *Melanotis hypoleucus*:

This is a characteristic species of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Brown-backed Solitaire *Myadestes occidentalis*

We observed the race *oberholseri* near San Cristobal and the race *deignani* north of the Isthmus

Rufous-collared Thrush *Turdus rufitorques*

This is one of the distinctive species of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Olive Warbler *Peucedramus taeniatus*

This distinctive species has (fairly) recently been put in its own family, based on very different DNA and voice characteristics.

Black-poll'd Yellowthroat *Geothlypis speciosa*

This taxon is the characteristic species of the Central Mexican marshes Endemic Bird Area (EBA 007).

Pink-headed Warbler *Ergaticus versicolor*

This glorious bird is one of the distinctive species of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Montezuma Oropendola *Psarocolius montezuma*

This species is obviously named after Montezuma or Moctezuma Xocoyotzin (1480-1520), Emperor of the Aztecs. He died of wounds inflicted by his own subjects, enraged of his support for the Spanish conquistadores under Cortes.

Bar-winged Oriole *Icterus maculialatus*

This very localized and rarely-encountered species is one of the distinctive birds of the North Central American highlands Endemic Bird Area (EBA 018).

Sierra Madre Sparrow *Ammodramus baileyi*

The total range (i.e. suitable habitat) of this rare and extremely-localized endemic covers only 54 km² and the population was estimated at 2500-10,000 birds, but is probably a lot less. Another small population occurs in the state of Durango. It is definitely one of the rarest of Mexican birds and is one of the characteristic species of the Sierra Madre Occidental and trans-Mexican range Endemic Bird Area (EBA 006).

Bridled Sparrow *Aimophila mystacalis*

This smart fellow is one of the characteristic species of the Balsas region and interior Oaxaca Endemic Bird Area (EBA 008).

Cinnamon-tailed Sparrow (Sumichrast's S) *Aimophila sumichrasti*

The bird is named after the Mexican naturalist and field worker Francis Sumichrast (1828-1882) and has a tiny area of distribution centred on the Pacific slope of the Tehuantepec Isthmus. It is one of the distinctive species of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec Endemic Bird Area (EBA 014).

White-throated Towhee *Pipilo albicollis*

This is one of the distinctive species of the Balsas region and interior Oaxaca Endemic Bird Area (EBA 008).

Common Bush Tanager *Chlorospingus ophthalmicus*

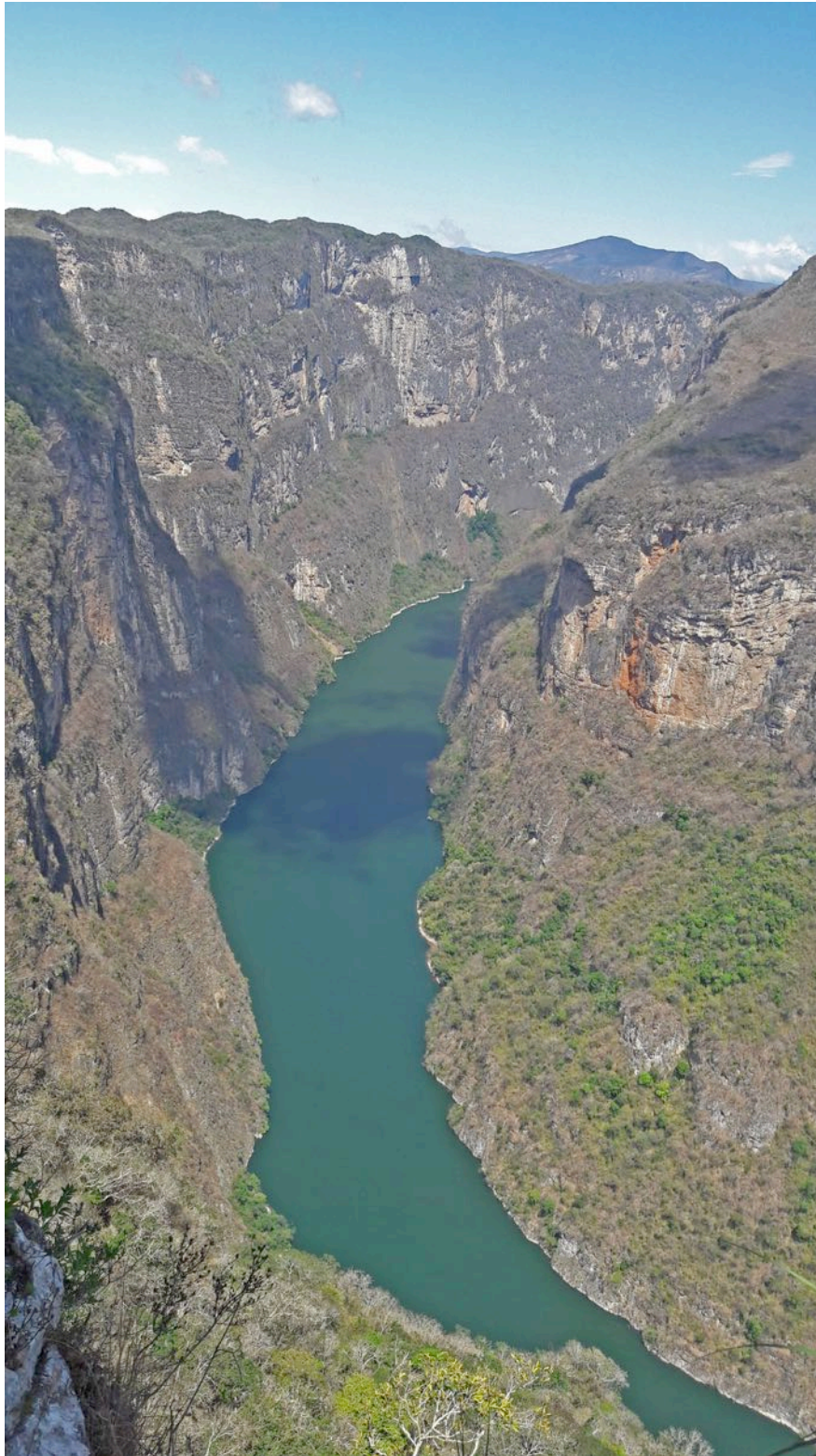
We saw the race *albifrons* above Puerto Angel and the nominate race in the Sierra de Juarez. The IOC mentions that Common Bush Tanager probably comprises multiple species, at least 5 in Mexico and Middle America!

Yellow-winged Tanager *Thraupis abbas*

Abbas (Latin) = abbot, for this bird was named after J. Abbott (1751-1840), a US philologist.

Rose-bellied Bunting (Rosita's B) *Passerina rositae*

The bird is named after Rosita Sumichrast, wife of the Mexican naturalist Francis Sumichrast. It is one of the characteristic species of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec Endemic Bird Area (EBA 014).



The Canyon del Sumidero (Mark Van Beirs)

BIRDS OF THE TOUR

Main tour

1 Pink-headed Warbler	24 points
2 Red Warbler	11
Ocellated Thrasher	11
4 Golden-cheeked Warbler	7
5 Rose-bellied (Rosita's) Bunting	6
Bumblebee Hummingbird	6

El Triunfo pre trip

1 Horned Guan	20 points
2 Resplendent Quetzal	13
3 Fulvous Owl	8
4 Sparkling-tailed Woodstar	6
5 Spotted Nightingale-Thrush	5
Wine-throated Hummingbird	5



Song Sparrow and Yellow Grosbeak (Mark Van Beirs)